



UNIVERSITY OF  
**South Carolina**  
UNION

*A Regional Palmetto College*

FO Minutes  
February 17, 2023

**In person attendance:**

Professor Gale Ashmore  
Dr. Deborah Hudson  
Dr. Allan Charles  
Professor Sandy Phillips-Long  
Dr. Lee Morris  
Dr. Andrew Pisano  
Dr. David Mitra  
Dr. Avery Fouts  
Dr. Maggie Aziz  
Dr. Emily Schafer  
Professor Kevin Torres  
Dr. Dave Hudson  
Dr. Randy Lowell  
Professor Neill Hance

**On-line attendance:**

Dr. Steve Lowe  
Dr. Andrew Kettler  
Dr. Steve Lownes  
Professor Caroline Wilson  
Professor Susan Goebel  
Dr. Joe Anderson  
Dr. Tekla Johnson  
Dr. Katie Klik  
Dr. Helene Maire-Afeli  
Ms. Meka Childs

FO Chair Dr. Andrew Pisano called the meeting to order at 12:00.

As the first order of business, Dr. Pisano recognized our guest, Meka Childs, who talked about PCAM 299 – Beyond the Classroom for Undergraduate Students. Ms. Childs is the Project Manager for this course which operates in conjunction with the Union YMCA. The objective of this course is to train undergraduate students to lead programs for K-12 students that will prepare those students for college. Dr. Aziz added that the course will be taught on Wednesdays as a hybrid course, taught by Coach Royce. Ms. Childs shared her contact information, which is [Badges@SCAfterschool.com](mailto:Badges@SCAfterschool.com).

**Approval of minutes from January 13 meeting**

Approved.

**Dean's Report: Dr. Randy Lowell**

Dr. Lowell's notes are attached. Specifically, he mentioned:

- ❖ Chrissie Lattimore is no longer able to be our commencement speaker, due to a conflict-of-interest statement in her contract. Dr. Lowell will be searching for another speaker for this event.
- ❖ This coming year is a time when we are allowed to modify our mission statement. One portion of our mission statement specifies our service area, which is no longer applicable. Dr. Lowell asked if anyone objected to amending our mission statement to be more in line with current reality. There were no objections.

### **Academic Dean's Report: Dr. Maggie Aziz**

Dr. Aziz's report is attached. Specifically, she mentioned:

- ❖ She received a note from Jean Carrano about new inductees into Alpha Sigma Lambda, an organization that focuses on education of adult students. Dr. Emily Schafer volunteered for induction.
- ❖ Progress reports are due March 03.
- ❖ Spring I course evaluations should be completed by February 28.
- ❖ Awards Night will be April 4 in the Main Building. There will be no reception afterwards, but take-home refreshments will be provided.
- ❖ Summer and Fall 2023 advising will begin on March 20. Dr. Aziz said she hopes to send out the schedule soon.
- ❖ Dr. Aziz reminded those present that no one is allowed to change course modality without prior approval.
- ❖ With regard to the course scheduling process, Dr. Aziz said that she is trying to accommodate everyone as much as possible, but there are many considerations and scheduling is a multi-step process.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Announcements:**

Professor Ivey spoke about the Literary Festival, which is scheduled for March 17-18. It will run on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 5:00 PM and on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. The keynote speaker will be Dr. James Everett Kibler who is a poet, novelist and former professor at the University of Georgia. Also featured will be Dr. Jesse Graves, a poet and scholar from East Tennessee State University. All presentations will be held in the USCU auditorium. Professor Ivey asked all to encourage their students to participate.

Dr. Fouts spoke about voting for Teacher of the Year, Adjunct of the Year, and Staff person of the year. This year, paper ballots will be used. Voting will take place on Wednesday and Thursday, February 22 and 23 in the Main Building from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM.

Professor Lynn Edwards sent the following note: "Courtney and I will be in Sumter all day on Friday so we will not be attending FO... please remind all professors to get the references in for the application cycle as soon as possible they have to be in before March 1 or the students will not be considered for upper division."

The next FO meeting will be March 24 at 12:00 PM; location TBD.

## **Adjournment**

At 1:14 PM there was a motion to adjourn. It was seconded and unanimously approved.

Following adjournment, Professor Bobby Holcombe spoke with advisors about advisement and financial issues related thereto.

Submitted by:  
Gale Ashmore, FO Secretary

### Students

- Enrollment for the Spring semester, compared to this time last year, is down from what was ultimately the highest enrollment semester for the campus. As of yesterday, headcount was at 987 compared to 1,224 at this time last year; and FTE at 572 compared to 713 this time last year. This deficit is primarily driven by the absence of the Pacer Pathway bridge program at Aiken this year, which consisted of 19 freshmen for the Spring semester, and by reduced numbers of dual enrollment students (including not having Legion Collegiate Academy for dual enrollment this year, which for last Spring consisted of 111 of those students for us there). For continuing and new freshmen students, however, we are at the same levels as last year, and still have until March 13 to add more students before the Spring II session begins. Applications for Fall 2023 are looking good and on track relative to where we were at this time of year last year for those.
- For the Fall semester, our athletic teams again excelled in the classroom, with an overall athletics GPA of 3.272, including the following team GPAs:
  - o NJCAA Softball – 3.743
  - o NJCAA Men's Soccer – 3.463
  - o NJCAA Baseball – 3.180
  - o NJCAA Women's Volleyball – 3.143
  - o Club Bass Fishing – 3.056
  - o Club Rifle Team – 2.951
- On the field, congratulations to one of our student-athletes, Alexandra Bell, for a particularly impressive performance on the mound, as she pitched her third complete game of the young season, with a 3-hit shutout against Southeastern Community College-Whiteville on February 8, securing the 1-0 victory for the Bantams.
- On Valentine's Day, our students represented the campus well for Carolina Day at the State House in Columbia, which is a day of advocacy for the USC system, including Helena Alexander, Andrew Baxley, Za'Kyah Jeter-Walton, Isa Murati, Michael Murphy, Jonathan Overton, Nico Steinweg, Hannah Truett, Molly Winstead, and Caden Jackson (who also played the role of our mascot, Blaze the Bantam at the event). This included an opportunity for our SGA President, Hannah Truett, to meet with Governor McMaster along with the SGA Presidents of the other USC campuses. As a group, we also were able to catch up with Representative Gilliam, Senator Martin, and Senator Peeler, to tell introduce them to our students, provide them with campus updates, and thank them for their support. Special thanks to Anita Whitney for coordinating the logistics with all of the students, with help from Brad Greer and Amy Queen that day.
- USC Union Research Club students raised over \$200 earlier this week with its Valentine's Bake Sale on Monday and Wednesday, so thank you to everyone who contributed to that. Coming up next month, the Research Club students will put on another Bake Sale for St. Patrick's Day. Other upcoming events for the Research Club will include a Lunch & Learn featuring Dr. Johnson's research on March 13 at noon in C106, a field trip to USC Lancaster's Native American Studies Center on the morning of March 22, and our Research Club Colloquium on April 12 at 4:00. The Club has discussed an additional Lunch & Learn and a car wash fundraiser at some point as well, but detail on those are to be determined.
- USC Union African American Alliance, supervised by Brandon Simpson, has planned a number of events in celebration of Black History Month. This included a presentation earlier this week on Fred Hampton, followed by screenings of "Judas and the Black Messiah" and "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever." Also, next week on February 22, that group will be putting on the Unity Day Luncheon for the campus, and on Thursday, will host their Art and Poetry night in the Main Building.

### **Faculty/Staff News**

- Palmetto College is looking at starting up its own Staff Senate, similar to what has recently been created on the Columbia campus, but more tailored to the nature of our campuses. Over the next couple of months, staff representatives from the campuses will be identified to work on a planning committee for what that body should look like, and from there each campus will work on putting those staff senators in place.
- Yesterday we had some folks on campus to put together some videos featuring our nursing program and students, as part of an appreciation/update to share with donors and entities who have helped to fund various portions of that program.
- Admissions has identified a new texting software that we are working on acquiring for the campus that will make it easier to quickly and efficiently push text messages directly to customized student groups as needed, including updates about campus activities and events that can come out of Student Activities.
- On March 30, USC Union will participate in the 2023 Union County Career Day, which is being organized by the Union County Development Board. This event will feature representatives from local industries, small business, government entities, etc. Originally, this event was going to be held at the fairgrounds in town, but instead appears that it will be held at Union County High School instead. Over the course of the day, they are planning on bringing through approximately 2,800 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, running from 8:30am until 2:00pm. For our USC Union booth at this event, we will have an opportunity to share information with those students about what we have to offer on campus from the student perspective, but also what types of careers they could pursue with the various courses and degrees that they could get from USC Union and Palmetto College. If any faculty are interested in spending any time at this booth over the course of that day to talk with those elementary/middle/high school students about careers in your discipline, we would definitely welcome that.

### **Facilities**

- All of the faculty and staff offices that are located in the second floor of Whitener Central Building on campus are now completely relocated to the fellowship hall space of the church building next to the Main Building parking lot while the HVAC replacement work ensues, which is projected to be a 4-6-month project.
- Other projects on campus are in various stages of preparation, including updates to the bathrooms in Truluck Gym that will start at the end of February, and a new wet lab in the Nursing Simulation Lab building that will start at the end of the semester, among others.
- For our Laurens location, we are aiming to be moved into the new space at the old Bell Street school in Clinton by August 1. A note to advisors, when advising begins next month for Fall 2023 classes, be sure to be mindful of whether your advisee may live closer to that location in Clinton than they do to our campus here in Union, so that they can consider taking classes there at Bell Street that they need if they'd like to do that and save themselves some time/money with that shorter commute on some days of the week.

### **Budget**

- We will have our Spring meeting with the Columbia's Budget Office on Wednesday next week to provide an update on where we stand at this point in the fiscal year, which is still well on track.
- On January 25, I was in attendance for President Amiridis budget request presentation to the House Ways and Means subcommittee, and then yesterday to the Senate Finance Committee. In both cases, his requests were generally well-received by those legislators on behalf of the system, and hopefully bodes well for the outcome of that process regarding our FY24 requests for USC Union.

**Academic Dean's Report  
February 2023**

**Academic Affairs:**

- Full semester progress reports are due March 6.
- Spring I course evaluations are open now and will close on Feb. 28. Please remind your students to check their Blackboard, USC email, and personal emails. They are sent a reminder electronically every two days.
- Annual Administrative Reviews will be returned by end of March.
- Please send Amber your Awards nominations by Friday, March 3.
- Awards Night will be held April 4 @ 6:30 in the Main Building Auditorium.
- Teacher of the Year voting will begin next week (Wednesday and Thursday 9:00-5:00 on the first floor of the Main Building).

**Advising:**

- Summer and Fall 2023 advising will begin March 20. I hope to send out the first draft of the schedule by the 13<sup>th</sup>. Please review this schedule closely and contact me immediately with any concerns.
- Mentoring for new advisors – request for volunteers?

**Course Materials and Syllabi:**

- Be sure to get information about any required course materials for your summer and fall courses to Tanja Black as soon as possible, ideally using the online submission portal to submit textbook information. If you are not requiring students to purchase any materials for your class, also let her know so they can convey that to the students as well.
- Always be sure to submit summer syllabi to Amber Ivey as soon as you have them prepared (by the first day of each semester).

**Peer Reviews:**

- Peer reviews will resume this semester. I will be reaching out to several of you to help conduct those reviews. Please have the reviews completed by the end of this semester.

**Faculty Accomplishments:**

We want to recognize your accomplishments! Please be sure to inform Dr. Aziz of any accomplishments such as publications, conference presentations, awards, etc.

**Required Community Education Resources:**

- The courses opened to all students February 13. Part one of each course is due March 6. Part two of each course is due April 24.

**CCSSE:**

- I have emailed faculty whose sections were selected for CCSSE administration. Please consider participating and letting us know when we should come to your classes to administer the surveys.

**Course Modality:**

- As a reminder, there is absolutely no reason for you to switch your course modality in the middle of the semester without prior approval.